

235.65**Infant Formula Returns****Overview****Policy**

Purchased infant formula **must** be returned to WIC when an infant develops an apparent intolerance to the formula being used and a prescribing authority prescribes another formula.

Local WIC agencies may replace both returned unopened cans of infant formula and unspent food instruments for infant formula.

Note: Infant formula cannot be returned to, or exchanged at vendors.

Participant Education

To reduce the amount of returned formula coming back to your office, staff should encourage the participants below not to purchase all their formula at one time until they are sure a formula change will not be needed. We do realize however, that this may not always be an option.

- New formula fed babies
- Babies changing formulas
- Babies stopping/decreasing breastfeeding and going to more formula

Local agency policies

Local agencies must establish policies requiring participants to bring purchased, unopened formula to an agency WIC office, outreach office, or clinic site. The policy must also address procedures for:

- **WIC staff to provide education to the participants listed above in effort to try and minimize the amount of formula that is returned to the agency.**
- **Inspection of the formula when it's returned, how it will be stored securely out of sight and its donation to a local food pantry or other community partner that provides resources to families.**
- **Donation of returned formula every 30 days at minimum**
- **Maintenance of a donation/disposal log to indicate the date, type, number of cans donated, and donation location.**
- **Disposal procedures if the returned formula does not meet minimum inspection criteria**
- **Maintenance of a donation/disposal log to indicate the date, type, and number of cans destroyed.**

The agency's policy **and donation/disposal log** must be available for review during the local agency office visit.

Overview, Continued

Minimum inspection

At a minimum, the policy should address the following points when completing inspection of the product:

- Expiration date;
- Assurance that the container has not been opened and/or tampered with;
- Clean, undented container;
- Product label intact and not missing

Donation of formula

Returned formula cannot be re-distributed to WIC participants. Instead, it should be donated to a local food bank, food pantry, or community partner that provides resources to families.

If the formula is unable to be donated due to minimum inspection requirements not being met, it must be disposed of promptly.

Best practices for disposal procedures includes but is not limited to:

- Dispose of contents in a separate trash container from the can.
- Dispose of formula in small batches to avoid large quantities of formula in the trash.
- Implement practices to ensure the public is not “dumpster diving” and removing formula from the trash.

Formula ordered through the special formula warehouse process

If you are concerned about a formula ordered by the State Agency via the special formula warehouse process that has not been picked up from the WIC clinic by the participant and think it may expire before another participant in your agency needs it, contact the state WIC office.

Reissuing Food Instruments (FIs)

IF the participant returns...	THEN...
With unspent formula benefits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create the new food package and verify it. 2. Click on the Food Benefits branch of the navigation tree and verify the correct months are checked for reissuance. 3. Issue benefits. 4. Ask the parent/guardian/participant to sign the signature pad. 5. Carefully review the food benefits print out to verify the correct items were reissued. <p>Note: Purchases are accounted for in the reissued balances.</p>
unopened cans of formula (participant has purchased some or all of the issued formula in the current issuance period)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inspect the unused formula per local agency policy. Only unused formula meeting the inspection guidelines maybe replaced. 2. Click on the Returned Formula panel of the Foods tree view. 3. Click on "Get Balance". - A row in the grid displays the name of the formula available for return. 4. Enter the number of cans of formula returned. 5. Create a new food package and verify it. 6. Issue benefits. 7. Ask the parent/guardian/participant to sign the signature pad. 8. Carefully review the food benefits print out to verify the correct items were reissued <p>Note: The data system will automatically calculate the appropriate quantity of formula to be issued and adjust benefits on the eWIC account.</p>

Reminder: You must enter returned formula prior to creating a new food package.